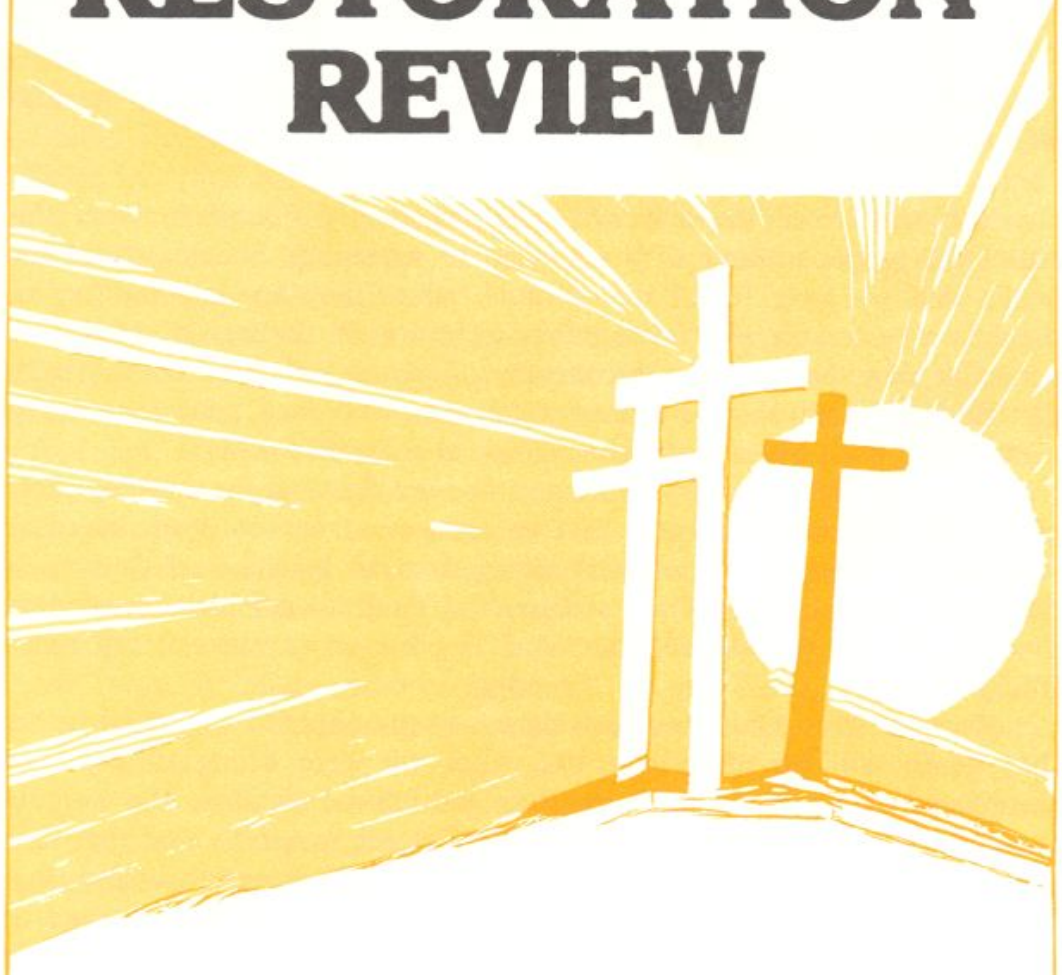
RESTORATION REVIEW



What matters in the final analysis is whether we and the churches have the faith to follow this vision and to engage in *costly unity*. We can never be one without surrendering to some extent the pride of our separate identities. True conciliar fellowship is a recognizable foretaste of the new humanity. It is the leaven of liberation and reconciliation. — *Paul A. Crow in Christian Unity: Matrix for Mission.*

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Jesus Today. . .

ARE WE SEEKERS OR FINDERS?

And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. - Jer. 29:13

You may recall the billboard sign that read *I Found It.* Does this reflect the proper attitude of a Christian or a church? Should we tell the public that we have found the spiritual values they are looking for, or should we be seekers who invite others to join us in the search? Many will no doubt view the church as a company of seekers, while others will insist that if the church has not found God then who has, and that church membership must mean more than joining in a search for him.

After all, Jesus does say, *Seek and ye shall find* and the apostles wrote of how the believer can know that he has passed out of death into life. And yet the same Jesus spoke of seeking first the kingdom of God, as if the search might be long if not endless, and Paul did not hesitate to admit that he had not yet laid hold but that "I press on to make it my own" (Philip, 1:12).

Recently when Ouida was driving me to the airport I suggested to her that death will be something like what we were doing. She would accompany me to the point of departure and bid me goodbye, and I would leave, as usual, on a long journey. The difference would be that that time around I would not return. I suggested to her, not altogether in jest, that some angel would inform me of my assignment in some remote corner of the universe, but that transportation would be no problem, and that in some way I would keep on serving and praising God.

Anyone hearing our conversation would conclude that we supposed ourselves to be finders rather than seekers. We were saying, *We have found it!* Our talk was not unlike that of the apostle who confidently wrote, "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day" (2 Tim. 4:8).

Still Ouida and I would be the first to admit that the search for truth is endless, and that we know the Lord only in part. We are indeed seekers and we invite others to join us in the long search.

So the dilemma is a false one. The church is not divided into seekers and finders, but it is composed of believers who are both, or it ought to be. Those in the church who have not really found anything have a bankrupt faith; those who have learned it all and are no longer searching also have a bankrupt faith. We often err both ways before the world: on one hand we have found so little that the world sees no real difference while on the other hand we presume to have found so much that we come across as phonies. In the message that we have found it, which sometimes takes the form of a bumper sticker, the *it* appears to the world as ambiguous if not superficial.

It could be said, as Pascal insisted, that it is the seeker who has found God, that one would not be seeking God if he had not already found him. This may be what Jeremiah is saying: to seek God with the whole heart is to find him. It is a truth that brings the church as well as the world to judgment. How many are there among us who profess to be seekers after God who seek him with the whole heart? Such wholehearted seeking is not necessarily measured by denominational loyalties, interest in religion, or even acceleration of activity. It is far more than intellectual and spiritual satisfaction. The whole-hearted search for God must reach the very center of our being. It implies deep commitment, as with Isaiah, who not only had a tremendous "religious experience," but responded with *Here I am, Lord, send me.*

It is not those who attain righteousness that Jesus blesses but those who long to be righteous, those who hunger and thirst. This is not a desire for moral excellence, which can easily be confused with a search for God, for one may be morally good and yet far from God. It is rather something like David's exultation, expressed by a man who was not all that morally excellent: "As the hart pants for the waterbrook so does my soul pant for thee, O Lord" (Ps. 42:1). It is in *wanting* to be good that we meaningfully search for God.

Yet it is appropriate to raise the question, as does Job, as to whether one can really find God by searching after him. The great mystery of it all is that despite how much we search after God we find him only because he first searches after us. It is not so much that we find God but that he finds us. This is the point of God's most precious gift. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10).

This is unique to the Christian faith. While there may be virtue in the other great religions of the world, they all emphasize man's effort to find God, not God's quest for man. Jesus came, not so much to direct man's search for God, but to search man out for God. The Bible is the story of God's long search for men and women. The Old Testament is not the account of a peculiar people's search for God, but the record of God seeking out his peculiar people.

God's long search, always motivated by his grace and love, found its ultimate expression in the gift of his own son, born in the midst of our sinful, rebellious world. He came from the heart of a seeking and loving God. *I am come*, he assured a confused world, not to judge or to condemn, but *to seek and to save the lost.* This is the personification of God's grace.

That beloved fisherman who became a great apostle was introduced to Jesus by his brother Andrew, who told him, "We have found the Messiah." That declaration must have really blown Simon's mind, and he lost no time in checking it out. Once Simon was within the circle of the Messiah's disciples, Jesus changed his name to Peter. What a career old Peter had! The end of the beginning came on Pentecost when he pro-claimed Jesus as the risen Christ, and the beginning of the end came in Rome when in the face of his sentence he requested to be crucified upside down. It all began when someone whom he trusted told him *We have found the Christ.*

All of us who believe have something of old Peter in us. While he was one who found the Lord and loved him recklessly, his faith sometimes faltered. He was a finder (and a loser!) who was always seeking. That is what made Peter like a rock. While he sometimes fell, he never retreated. If he followed the Lord "afar off" when the going was rough, he was never too far. He was the seeker-finder that should be in us all.

We would expect Peter to write action-packed letters as he did to the scattered, aliens: "Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13).

Is this not the essence of being a seeker-finder?—*the Editor*

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THE HIDDENNESS OF GOD

Truly,thou art a God who hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior.—Isa. 45:15

By His very nature the God of heaven seems to be beyond man's reach, even though He reveals something of Himself to us. Paul sees God as giving to all men "life and breath and everything" and as setting their allotted periods and boundaries "that they might feel after him and find him." While the apostle insists that "he is not far from each one of us," he makes it clear that God must be sought out and *found.* Once we learn this great truth of the hiddenness of God we will not be inclined to presume that we can put Him in a box and limit Him to the vagaries of our own sect.

Isaiah in the text referred to above saw the hidden God revealing Himself in the deliverance of Israel from Babylonia captivity. Something like the sun coming out from behind a cloud, Israel's God had long secluded Himself, having assigned His people to two generations of captivity, but now He was ready to return them to their homeland on eagle's wings. He had chosen Cyrus, a pagan king. "He is my shepherd," the Lord said of the Persian King, "and he shall fulfill all my purposes. Even though Cyrus did not know the Lord, still God chose him and named him, even from his mother's womb. The prophet says that God had grasped the right hand of Cyrus "to open doors before him" and thus deliver Israel. It was the second great exodus of God's people (Isa. 44:28; 45:1-4)

At the first exodus, when the Lord chose Moses to deliver His people from Egyptian bondage, it was a hidden God who revealed Himself. Again the sun came out from behind the clouds, after hundreds of years of waiting, and God responded to the mournful cries of Israel. But the Lord always remains at least partly hidden. He appeared to Moses in a burning bush when He commissioned him for the task.

So it was on the sojourn to the promised land. When God gave the people the law at Sinai, His presence was oblique. "The Lord said to Moses, 'Lo, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever.'" (Ex. 19:9). While the Lord kept Himself hidden, He had given the people sufficient evidence of His presence, and He expected them to believe Moses from then on. What a sobering revelation! What excuse is there for man's disbelief?

The sojourn to Canaan really blows one's mind, for it was actually directed by the hidden God of heaven. "The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night; the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people" (Ex. 13:21-22).

This leaves us to wonder why God has always revealed Himself in this hidden way, either by bush or fire or cloud or even "a still small voice." It is probable that it can be no other way, God being what He is, eternal, infinite, and perfect. While there is the promise that the redeemed will see God, we must suppose that this has its limitations. How can a human being, even in eternity, look upon the God of heaven in all His glory and majesty except in some hidden way? After all, we do not become gods in heaven, nor will we be perfect and infinite in the way that the Father is. We must presume, at least from the perspective of earth, that there is no way for infinite man to look fully upon the glory of God, even in heaven.

But it need not be. If we can but see a reflection of that glory like Moses did at Sinai, whose face became so illumined that the people could not look upon him, that will be enough, if not too much, for us. The mere thought of one day seeing the hidden God is staggering in its dimension. I can only conclude that there is no way for it to be except in some oblique way. But as I say, to be even in the outer edges of God's glory will more than satisfy us. And God will have to prepare us even for that! Now to see the Lord and Savior, that I can comprehend. That is because Jesus is that part of heaven that became (and remains) like me!

That is why we can speak of knowing God only in a very limited sense. Paul could say to the Galatians (4:9) "now that you have come to know God," and then sort of takes it back with "or rather to be known by God," as if to concede that we never really come to know God, though it is safe to say that He knows us. Paul liked to quote Isaiah in saying, "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" (l Cor. 2:16) In a very real sense the apostles saw the God of heaven as unseeable, unknowable, and hidden. "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!," Paul could exult, "How unsearchable are his judgments and inscrutable his ways!" (Rom. 11:33)

It is understandable, therefore, that the hidden God has a storehouse of secrets. "The secret things belong to the Lord our God," Dt. 29:29 assures us. The good news is that the God who holds secrets *has* revealed some things to us, for that same passage says, "but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children."

The same book goes on to assure us that when God reveals Himself to us He does so clearly and unambiguously. What a marvelous truth that the hidden God reveals Himself plainly. "This commandment which I command you this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off," Dt. 30:11 tells us. "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it" (Dt. 30:11-14).

There is a kind of economy in God's disclosure of Himself. While He chose to reveal Himself to Moses, even "as a man speaks to his friend," He wanted no one else around. "No man shall come up with you, and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain," God said to Moses as he prepared to give him the tables of stone for the second time. Flocks and herds were not even to feed before the mountain at such a glorious time (Ex. 34:3).

Even to Moses on this splendid occasion God remained hidden. It was a difficult time for the prophet, with the people turning to idolatry and longing for the fleshpots of Egypt, and he wanted assurance from God that things would turn out right. “Show me thy glory,” Moses asked. God assured him of His approval, “But you cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live” (Ex. 33:20). But the Lord did place Moses in the cleft, of a rock and covered him with His hand while His glory passed before him. When God removed His hand Moses could see His back.

Whatever we make of such stories, they surely point to the problem of finite man moving into the presence of the infinite, and they show that the hidden God economizes in disclosing Himself. The God of heaven has neither hand nor back, of course, but this was His way of revealing to us that one very special person for a very special purpose was able to look upon the outer edges of God’s glory. Can any person ever expect more than that?

And yet even in those ancient times God disclosed His attributes to Moses, attributes that manifest themselves throughout Scripture and in all that God does in history. He said to Moses: “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness (Ex. 34:6). Here we have the attributes of the hidden God: mercy, grace, longsuffering, love, faithfulness. These are gloriously demonstrated throughout history and perfectly personified in Jesus Christ, who “reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature” (Heb. 1:3).

We may conclude that it is in reference to these attributes that the Christ is “the very image of the invisible God.” The attributes are actually one, *love,* the others being expressions of that love. God is gracious and merciful because He is love, and that is why He is longsuffering and faithful. God may express Himself in many ways, even with wrath, but Scripture could never say that *God is wrath* as it says *God is love*.

God has made it possible for us to see His perfect love by giving us the Christ. In fact He has shown us Himself by revealing to us His son. Philip may have been naive in requesting of Jesus, “Lord, show us the Father,” but Jesus’ answer is cosmic in significance: “He who has seen me has seen the’ Father” (Jn. 14:9).

What is God like? God is love. And we see this love gloriously manifested in Jesus Christ. This love led to God’s suffering for sinful man, even to dying like a criminal. We can look to the Cross and see how God loves. It inspired this line from G. A. Studdert-Kennedy: *The blistering flame of eternal shame that burns in the heart of God.*

Just as the prodigal son found renewal when he set his heart on his father at home, so we will solve our problems, including that of a fractured brotherhood, when we set our hearts upon the God who hides Himself. “We love, because he first loved us,” Jn. 4:19

assures us. “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.” When we are reluctant to accept each other, how can we be so free to accept God?

It is a compelling logic.—*the Editor*

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REVELING IN THE WORD

Now and again I select at random a volume of Alexander Campbell’s *Millennial Harbinger* and thumb through it, often observing lines that I underscored years ago. They often mean more when I go over them a second or maybe a fifth time. Through the years I have made my own index at the front of each volume, an these call to mind particular goodies. This time around, in the 1852 volume, a particular item caught my eye once more. It meant so much to me this time that I wanted to share it with someone at once, so I bore it to the kitchen where Ouida and her mother, who now lives with us, were doing chores. I pulled up a stool and read to them what brother Campbell had to say about a university professor friend of his, Moses Stuart of Harvard, who had died after a painful illness.

I told the girls of an experience I had with Moses Stuart when I was at Harvard, even though it was more than a century after the renowned professor’s death. Checking one day to see what books the theological library might have of Campbell’s works, I came upon an old copy of his *Christian System,* or maybe it was his *Christian Baptism.* On the flyleaf were inscribed these words: *To Moses Stuart, from the author, along with his other writings, affectionately, A. Campbell.* I was deeply involved in other assignments at that time, but I took the time to appreciate the “find” I had made. It added to the evidence that Campbell kept in touch with the theological climate of his day and that some of the leaders were his friends, at least by way of correspondence. The library of course has numerous works by Moses Stuart. I have known for a long time that he was one of this country’s leading theologians of the nineteenth century.

What Campbell wrote about Prof. Stuart was actually an excerpt from the funeral oration given by a fellow professor. Campbell entitled it “The Last Hours of Professor Stuart,” and it summarizes the life of a man who reveled in the word of God, which is the phrase Ouida used when she heard his story. *Reveling in the Scriptures!* Ah, what a difference it would make for the modern church if there were more who enjoyed that kind of excitement in the study of the Bible.

What impressed Ouida and Mother Pitts is this description of the old professor: “Once when he made a certain discovery of a fact in Biblical interpretation, he could not sleep for more than thirty-six hours. His solace was in the Word of God.” We all know that people are made sleepless when they win a sweepstakes or in some way become rich over night, but how about becoming so excited over a newly-found truth in Scripture that’ one cannot sleep?

It reminds one of the love that the psalmist had for the word of God; “More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb” (Ps. 19:10).

The ability to become excited over Biblical truth is a grace to be cultivated. Devotion to Scripture will hardly come to one who does not seek it. We learn to love the Bible just as we learn to love anything else, and we are not going to love it if we do not want to love it. If a woman loves her flower garden because she tends it, it is also true that she tends it because she loves it. The person who takes the Bible in hand only occasionally and then mainly out of duty will never grow excited over it.

Rare is the Christian who really hungers for the word, as if there is no way to get enough. We can believe that the indwelling Spirit will help to cultivate a love for the word in those who are poor in spirit. Once we can get excited over the great truths of the Bible we will have little interest in those superficial issues that divide the Body of Christ.

Take, for example, the transfiguration of Christ. If that does not excite us, it can only be that we have been immunized by the world. Not only was Jesus gloriously transfigured before the eyes of the apostles, but the record tells us that Moses and Elijah put in an appearance, talking with Jesus. But only Luke tells us what the old saints talked with him about — “his departure, which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem” (Lk. 9:31). I can see a Moses Stuart digging into this passage with such excitement that it disturbed his sleep. The record indicates that the glory of this experience also disturbed the sleep of Peter, James, and John!

Or take one of the great psalms, such as the 139th where David realizes how his very being is laid bare before God: “O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me! Thou knowest when I sit down and when I rise up; thou discernest my thoughts from afar.” He goes on to say that God is acquainted with all his ways and “Even before a word is on my tongue, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.” The poet goes on to say that there is no escape from God’s presence: “If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.”

"Thou knowest me right well," David concedes, realizing that God was there when he was formed in his mother's womb. Even darkness does not limit the great God of heaven: "Even the darkness is not dark to thee, the night is bright as the day; for darkness is as light with thee."

If that does not excite us, we can only conclude that we have been anesthetized by TV or mesmerized by things. It certainly excited David: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it." Paul got excited like that: "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways" (Rom. 12:33).

One position taken by the old professor is in keeping with what Campbell was contending for out on the new frontier: "I have long since learned that feelings in religious experience are deceptive." He went on to say, "I look mainly to my life for my evidence. I think my first aim in life has been to glorify God, and that I have been ready to labor and suffer for him."

A radical form of Calvinism greatly influenced American frontier religion, and feelings, which were mystically related to certain presumed workings of the Spirit, were the arbiter. This led to a mystical "call" to the ministry, a certain "conviction" that one had "received" before he even had the power to believe, and church membership based upon an "experience" that sounded sensational enough to satisfy the church. Thus Campbell's first controversies were over "experimental religion." It is most interesting that during those years there was an outstanding theologian at Harvard, steeped in piety and in the Scriptures, who was teaching that *feelings in religious experience are deceptive.*

A German philosopher, Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleirmacher, who is sometimes called "the father of modern philosophy," greatly influenced American Protestantism in its emphasis upon subjective experience. He gave "heartfelt religion" a sophisticated turn, calling it intuition. He spoke of "the experience of grace" and "The consciousness of sin and guilt," concepts that are appropriate in a proper context, but he made feeling the key to religion, not reason.

Campbell, on the other hand (and Prof. Stuart also we may presume) insisted that there must first be reason, which makes application of God's revelation, and then feeling, which enjoys what reason has wrought. So feelings must be monitored by reason, which is ruled by the Scriptures, lest they be deceptive. So the Scriptures sit in judgment over feelings, not the other way around. The Scriptures, properly applied, never deceive, while feelings often do. We should of course "feel" that we are doing the right thing, which is what we call a good conscience, but it is equally important that our consciences be educated by God's disclosure of His will for us.

It is remarkable how this old issue will not die. It is not only very much alive today in the charismatic movement, but it very much pervades the thought of many of us in all the churches. The villain is our own self-will. Our feelings, which we may associate with deep religious experience, are often dictated by what we want to do.

Feelings are deceptive. It is a wise warning from one who "being dead yet speaketh," even from the hallowed halls of Harvard.

Campbell reported that the old professor often thought of death and was never more than a "a Sabbath day's journey" from it. He lived to die. As he anticipated the great translation he wrote: "When I behold the glory of the Saviour, as revealed in the gospel, I am constrained to cry out with the believing Apostle, My Lord and my God."

At last he wrote: "And when my departing spirit shall quit these mortal scenes, and wing its way to the world unknown, with my latest breath I desire to pray, as the expiring martyr did, 'Lord Jesus Christ, receive my spirit.' " He concluded with: "1 ask for no other privilege on earth but to make known the efficacy of His death; and none in heaven but to be associated with those who ascribe salvation to his blood."

Prof. Stuart obviously had deep feelings, but they were rooted in the Scriptures and in the living hope in Jesus Christ. His feelings even reached out to us all, a desire to be with us in the home of the redeemed.

That will be something to be associated with the dear brother, won't it?—*the Editor*

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Travel Letter . . .

FROM INDIANA TO SASKATCHEWAN

I do not recall ever being in a home before that has an inscribed cornerstone. But the one in which I now sit near Salem, Indiana has one that reads: *Campbell Place/Holy To The Lord/For Sherry, My Beloved Wife, And Our Children: Mark, Carrie, Timothy, And Nathan/Aug. 5, 1978/R.W.C.*

I knew Bob Campbell, the creator of the stone, before his wife and children came along. He was a student of mine at MacMurray College in Illinois in the 1950's and a fellow worker in the kingdom. He is now a school teacher-minister, serving schools and churches here in Washington county, where there are some 40 congregations of the Stone-Campbell heritage, many of them country churches. That Bob's ministry is both effective

and conciliatory is evidenced by the fact that when Elton Trueblood, the most famous Friend of this state, heard him he sought to draft him for service among the Quakers. It is just as well that Bob Campbell remain a Campbellite, for we need more like him, not fewer.

Still this home has not gone untouched by Quaker influence, for daughter Carrie is a student at nearby Earlham College. She tells me of her visit with the Truebloods, who are now aged but still active around the campus. I told her the story of how Dr. Trueblood lost his cool some years ago when visiting Abilene Christian University, confronted as he was with both professors and students on the subject of baptism. But I assured her that even a humble Quaker has the right to blow his stack once in a lifetime, especially when Church of Christ folk are nipping at his heels.

The cornerstone is no ostentacious display. This home is dedicated to the Lord, with the family sharing it with foster children, two brothers who were so neglected that they became custodians of the state. They all sit around an ample table where both body and soul is fed. All the children learn to pray, and they read and discuss the word together. They also learn to work. As I watched the kids on tractor and mower, in barn and greenhouse, picking tomatoes and grubbing potatoes, I thought of how fortunate they are. And no TV. I was into my second day here before I realized something was missing. No TV! But it is no big deal and no one is anti-TV. They are just too busy for it.

I was especially impressed when one of the foster kids wrecked the mower by losing control and allowing it to run down an embankment. He sat beside me at the table that night, self-chastened, explaining that it got away from him. But he went unrebuked. It was all right; “we can fix it.” I remembered that back in Texas we hang kids for less than that.

Due to my recent bout with hepatitis it was unlikely that I would be able to fill this appointment, even after once postponing it. Two physicians were advising me. One, who is a dear friend, told Ouida to keep me home in bed; the other, a specialist recommended by the first, told me I would be all right. As we all usually do, I obeyed the one that suited me. Following my first address I was so weak that I feared I had erred in attempting it, and Ouida’s chastening words came to mind, “I don’t want you to come home on a stretcher.” But by going to bed at a reasonable hour, which is not usually the case in work like this, and resting somewhat during the day I have gradually gained strength, so that speaking no longer tires me. I reported to Ouida that I feel almost normal, and I called my physician friend to tell him I was feeling great. He cautioned me not to overdo it.

Southern Indiana is a great place to be, convalescing or not, and I love to visit the country churches, such as the Walnut Grove Christian Church; which is about six dirt and gravel roads from here, where Gary Outhout ministers and which has a long and

interesting history. I addressed one of their largest audiences ever on the resurrection of our Lord, relating it to cases of conversion in *Acts.* One brother in the area thanked the Lord afterward that "That is the kind of preaching that led us out of denominationalism." While I appreciated that, I am not sure that we are really that far out of denominationalism.

I also addressed the Highway Church of Christ, non-instrument, in Pekin, on lessons from the Old Covenant Scriptures that point to the faithfulness of God. Earl Mullins ministers there, and I was able to meet for the first time a host of dear sisters and brothers, some of whom came some distance, such as Gary and Violet McKee and Larry and Marsha Baldwin from Bloomington and Jesse and Doris Ireton from Shirley. Ouida is well acquainted with such names through the mailing of this journal, as she is with all of you that have been subscribers for some time.

A meeting of our folk who simply call themselves Christians meets at the John Hay Center in Salem. It was my second time around with them, and I spoke on some of the truths deposited in the book of Malachi. These are my kind of down home folk, so we get along beautifully. A visitor who had heard of me told a brother that he expected me to be "intellectual" and over his head, but that he found me to be his kind of guy after all, to his surprise.

I especially enjoyed our visits to French Lick where I thrice spoke to the Springs Valley Christian Church, once on the history of our Movement. From the Scriptures I spoke on "The Two Sides of Salvation," based on Eph. 2:8 (grace and faith). When I placed baptism under faith, showing it to be the outward expression of faith (faith being *both* inward trust and outward obedience), one sister told me she had at last been able to understand the place of baptism. On Sunday a.m. I gave an address on "The Blessed Hope," which seemerl to encourage a number of people. In the Campbell home on Sunday p.m., where folk gathered from all over the county, I told anecdotes and spoke on the four "Faithful Sayings" that the apostle underscores in the pastoral epistles. It seemed that with every discourse from the Scriptures I grew stronger. A lot of people have been praying for me.

I was home only two days before flying on to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on the plains of western Canada, where I was a guest of Elgin and June Banting near the farm towns of Outlook and Macrorie. The occasion was the 26th edition of the Macrorie Camp, which should be called Outlook since the Church of Christ in that town is the sponsor. It is held in a hollow on the Banting farm, which is measured in sections rather than acres. The hollow is a cozy oasis nestled in the treeless plains as if by accident, the trees of which form an elongated tunnel, ample in size to accommodate numerous tents, trailers, and

campers. The annual affair, which is open to all persuasions of our heritage, attracts as many as 200 visitors.

The Bantings, which now includes two grown sons who have never missed a camp and "Granny," the paternal grandmother of the clan, consider each camper a personal guest, which makes the camp an extension of their home. For years they even cooked the meals for the scores that came, but now each family is on its own, except for breakfast which they all share together. Since the speakers are not equipped for camping, they stay "up at the farm" in one of the two Banting homes, which, though five miles away, is still on the farm. This was to my advantage, for I was still recuperating from my recent illness and might not have faired too well in the primitive conditions of the camp.

The campers have no hook-up to either water, sewage, or electricity. There is a central spigot for water, which is hauled in to a cistern on a nearby hill, and there are numerous outhouses labeled either *Hers* or *Hims,* some of which are painted in psychedelic colors. The primitiveness of the camp is by design rather than necessity. If a speaker needs to refer to the Bible or his notes he can use a flashlight. I chose to rely on memory, so my presentations were out of darkness rather than light, though this was compensated in part by a roaring camp fire, which provided warmth as well as light in the hollow's evening chill.

The other teachers were Rolando Paraiso of Winnipeg, Manitoba and Jim Williams of Prince Albert, Sask., both of whom did a super job in giving the auditors something to think about. Rolando is burdened with the problems of church growth or the lack of growth, while Jim is persuaded that many of our problems within the Movement stem from not knowing what the gospel is and is not. Rolando works with an instrumental Christian Church while Jim is associated with a non-instrument Church of Christ, which is reflective of the openness of the camp.

The Church of Christ at Outlook, which sponsors the camp, has always been non-instrumental, and yet they are generally supportive of and associated with Christian Churches and their causes, such as Alberta Bible College. Though we had no service there, I made it a point to visit their quaint little building. Their sign reads *Church of Christ.* Once inside one finds no organ or piano. All appears *bona fide,* as if right out of Texas. But on the table are copies of *Christian Standard* and the bulletin board advertises projects of the Christian Church. So what is it, Church of Christ or Christian Church? From our sectarian perspective in the States perhaps it is neither.

Our old party categories simply do not apply in Canada, and it is just as well that we leave them home. Their beginnings were independent of our and they have a different history, though we both have our roots in Scotland and Ireland. The Canadians are of

course British, and it often shows in their view of things. Elgin (pronounced with a hard *g* as in *begin* and not like the name of the watch), who likes to say "Good show" when he is pleased with a performance, said to me with pragmatic resignation: "There's the minister system. We don't like it, but its there." I had no problem with that, for I knew where he was coming from. It was more British than American!

Arriving a day early and leaving a day late, partly to recuperate from my bout with hepatitis, I had time to walk somewhat about the Banting farm. After walking away from the house two or three miles I was still on their property! While the sections of wheat were not yet ripe, it stood at full stature, and it waved with the breeze as far as the eye could see, not unlike a vast sea. Elgin, who was born on the farm nearly six decades ago, tells how his father, only recently deceased, homesteaded his first quarter-section while yet a boy, not long after the Indians roamed those plains in search of buffalo.

As I looked over those several sections of wheat and grain I was reminded of all the hard work it must have taken — decades of blood and sweat and tears. In the earlier years the ground was of course broken with horse and plow and no automation. The machinery now used staggers the imagination and the cost is astronomical. The Bantings can count 146 rubber-tire wheels that touch the ground, bearing scores of vehicles.

One such vehicle is a grain auger, which loads and unloads grain bins or silos. Elgin still had part of last year's wheat crop to take to market, one bin containing about 18,000 pounds of wheat. The auger spiraled it into a truck, just like that, leaving only two or three feet of wheat on the bin floor that human hands had to shovel into the mouth of the auger. I climbed in to help Elgin and his son Blayne (who is a ministerial student), but I soon learned that that was no job for me. But I had a good excuse. I had been ill! The next time around I will have to come up with a different excuse.

Once the truck was loaded Elgin and I took it to the co-op in Macrorie and it was unloaded faster than you can say Jack Robinson. We were of course weighed in and out, and Elgin got his check right on the spot, at $4.00 a bushel. The wheat will probably go to Russia. Elgin has a super modern combine, a very imposing piece of machinery, that was made in Russia. When I asked him why Russia, he explained that theirs was $25,000 cheaper. I dared not ask what the monster cost.

Well, the story of our churches in Canada is not all that different, except that they have not grown like the Banting farm. The churches are mostly tiny and are far apart. To enjoy such fellowship as the Outlook Camp they often have to travel great distances. Friendships become very meaningful and fellowship is often rich and deep. Every church is a story of a struggle and hardship. The Canadians are a hardy folk with lots of hang-in

power, and they are not so quick to draw lines of fellowship. We will do well to know them better and to emulate their work of faith and labor of love.

So I was blessed all the way from the verdant hills of southern Indiana to the Big Sky of western Canada. A good show!—*the Editor*

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MYTHS OF THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT (5)

W. Carl Ketcherside

There is a kind of just retribution which providence assesses against those who make the tragic error of thinking that they alone are the objects of God's real love while all other believers are rejected. They can never know real peace or serenity. They must always be nervous and distraught for fear there is some point at which they are remiss. This causes them to be upset and irritable with others to whom they project their own insecurities and doubts. Too, they are troubled, if they are really committed to their sectarian stance, by the fact that they can never wholly free themselves from dependence upon those whom they have already condemned to eternal destruction.

Let me illustrate. The very Bible which has become hallowed to some segments of the "Church of Christ" was produced by forty-seven scholars commissioned by a King of England. It is a revised version as it plainly says on the flyleaf "Translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised." It was called the authorized version because it was authorized to be read in the Anglican Churches. It would do a great many people good to read the superscription addressed "To the most high and mighty Prince, James, by the grace of God the King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the faith, etc." It was written by Miles Smith, and appeared in the front of the version until a few years ago.

If John Overall or Andrew Downes came to one of our meetings they would be ignored. Certainly they would not be called upon to read the scripture lesson. But had it not have been for them and their forty-five colleagues among the translators no one else might read it either. We owe more than we can ever pay to these scholarly men from Westminster and Oxford whose work was first published in long ago 1611. Yet, if Michael Greene or John R. W. Stott, from the Church of England today came among us we could not call upon them to lead in prayer. As a matter-of-fact, Reuel Lemmons got called upon the carpet for asking a Christian Church brother to pray at a meeting in Texas. This shows how ridiculous we have become.

We face the same problem with the hymns we sing. Those who composed them in honor of God and Christ were good enough that we can borrow their compositions, but they were not good enough to lead them if they visited us. We can bear down on “There Is A Fountain Filled With Blood,” and can thrill to its pulsations but if William Cowper were here and came among us we would be uncomfortable and as cold toward him as the top shelf of our refrigerator. “Amazing Grace,” written by John Newton, a good friend of Cowper, is sung in every congregation I know, and song leaders and preacher alike have commended it, but if Newton showed up we could not ask him to lead us in it. He is not of us. It is a little like stealing tomatoes from a neighbor’s garden and refusing to invite him to eat with us when he comes to visit us.

Even more absurd is our practice when we are holding a “gospel meeting” which may consist of lecturing on everything except the Good News. We print broadsides and brochures which we deliver from door to door, and in which we exhort our neighbors to “Come worship with us.” On practically everyone of them occurs the statement “Everyone welcome.” Anyone who believes that is gullible indeed. You are welcome only if you come prepared to swallow without question what has been prepared and is poked down your throat. If you start questioning some of the suppositions the folk will gather around to bait and heckle you, with three or four speaking at once, I know, because I have been to a number of meetings when it turned out that “Everyone welcome” meant everyone but me.

Some of our sectarian antics are a little laughable. If a Christian Church preacher attends one of our meetings the ushers run halfway across the auditorium to escort him to a seat, hand him a songbook open to the proper place, and point to the verse the congregation is singing, as if he could not find it for himself. But to call upon him to lead in prayer would be a no-no. That’s one place that “Come worship with us” is canceled out hurriedly. He can sing a prayer but he cannot say one. If it is set to music it is alright. If not, just forget it!

What makes otherwise good neighbors and excellent people engage in such childish shenanigans? The answer is quite simple. They are operating on false premises. They have been led to believe that the way to please God is to mistreat His other children. Their way to demonstrate loyalty to God is by acting despicably toward others who also profess to love Him. Actually, the very opposite is the case. Fortunately those who have begun to think for themselves and are divesting themselves of the “herd mentality” are fast outgrowing such behavior. They no longer confuse the “law of the pack” with the “love of the flock.” Such development is on an ever-ascending scale. The more who get their eyes opened the fewer there will be who prefer to walk in the shadows. Let me detail briefly some of the wrong concepts which have governed us.

1. Fellowship is conditioned upon agreement. It is not requisite for agreement but the very opposite. We are not in the fellowship because we agree but because we are in the fellowship we strive to come into agreement. Every commandment to be one, to speak the same things, and to see things alike was given to those who were already in the fellowship. Not one was given to bring men into it. Faith in Jesus is essential to fellowship.

2. Conformity in knowledge is essential to working together in Jesus and uniformity of opinion is necessary to our walking together in the Spirit. The apostolic teaching is that knowledge puffs up while love builds up (1 Cor. 8:1). The entire fourteenth chapter of Romans was written to tell us how to get along with brethren with whom we differ.

3. Recognition of the relationship with one in Christ means approval of every idea he espouses. We need to remember that tolerance is not the endorsement of any thing that is wrong, but the endurance of one who thinks it is right. Jesus did not receive us because we were right on everything and will not reject us because we are mistaken about some things. If one is right about Jesus he can be wrong about a lot of other things and still be saved; if he is wrong about Jesus, he can be right about everything else and still be lost.

4. A false teacher is a mistaken brother who expresses his notions. The term “false teacher” is found but once in the sacred scriptures (2 Peter 2:1). He is scripturally identified as one who “through covetousness shall with feigned words make merchandise of others.” The idea conveyed by “pseudo” is that of falsity, misleading or lying, and doing so knowingly. But one can be honestly mistaken and most people who are branded as “false teachers” are. They are not deliberately lying and one is not condoning a lie when he recognizes as a brother one who states his opinion or deduction.

5. Because disciples are to judge the world we are entitled to act as a judiciary to condemn every other believer who disagrees with us about any doctrinal matter. No so. The fact is that Jesus teaches that we shall be judged with the judgment with which we judge others. If we demand that another understand everything just as we do then we shall have to understand everything just as Jesus does. We will be laid beside Him to be measured by the same yardstick we have used upon others. There will thus be no chance for any of us.

So it is no wonder that we are a jittery people and that we bluster about our righteousness to cover up our fears. Let us try to cultivate the one virtue which fulfills the whole law. Every commandment is taken care of by the one precept to “love your neighbor as yourself.” Unfortunately, we have not become known as a particularly compassionate, understanding and forgiving people toward each other, but it is not too late to undo our mistakes.

Resolve to edge in a little reading every day, if it is but a single sentence. If you gain fifteen minutes a day, it will make itself felt at the end of the year.—*Horace Mann*

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OUR CHANGING WORLD

The United Presbyterian Church had its General Assembly in Hartford, Ct. during the summer. On hand was a renewal group known as Presbyterians United for Biblical Concerns. These "evangelicals," as they call themselves, are seeking spiritual renewal among Presbyterians. They showed a film on "Stirrings of the Spirit," which depicts renewal at some seminaries and churches. For 20 years this group has hung in, seeking "to fire spiritual awakening in the denomination." They work from within, peacefully, and do not cease being Presbyterians. They may get discouraged, but they stay with it. Twenty years!

We regret to report that one of our leading ministers in the Church of Christ, Wes Reagan, longtime minister of one of our renewal churches, Burke Rd. in Houston, is now a member of the First Methodist Church in Pasadena. Wes suffered long with our people, urging them to hang in and work and hope for a better day Since he himself did not stay and continue the struggle for a freer and more responsible Church of Christ, some of his people are confused and discouraged. We must remember the Biblical principle *To each his own.* Wes will be a blessing wherever he is, and we will keep on loving him and accepting him. The rest of us, who cannot go that direction, will stay where we are (like the Presbyterians above!) and continue the work for renewal where God has planted us. In time God will grant the harvest in *his* way, not our way.

William S. Banowsky, another eminent Church of Christ minister, has not left the Church of Christ, but he has left the University of Oklahoma, where he has been president for several years, to become president of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce. Bill is about the only preacher among us that ministers ecumenically, to various denominations as a guest lecturer, and is still accepted (sort of) by the powers that be in the Church of Christ. But then again, how many are there that dare to be that free? With time this will change. More and more of our leaders will break the bonds of exclusivism and become a part of the church at large (and will they love it!), and it will become acceptable, even welcomed. We must believe! So Bill Banowsky may be a pathfinder as well as president of this and that, which he must find boring.

Through the years Harding University has gained the reputation of being somewhat "right wing" in economics and politics. But what they do they do well. Their economics team came to Dallas recently and won the national championship in the 1982 Students in Free Enterprise competition. They also won in 1981 and were co-champs in 1980. Harding faculty and students also did mission work this summer, 300 of them, in nations all over the world, by passing out literature and knocking on doors.

There are two stories about animals that we must share with our readers. David Vanarsdall in Wasilla, Alaska writes of a bear rattling the door of their church during Sunday services. But the poor thing was denied entrance and was chased away by a brother. Dr. Bob Lane of Calico Rock, Arkansas tells how his little dog was at death's door due to an invasion of ticks. Testing his blood and finding him far short of red corpuscles, the doctor put the family's larger dog to sleep and performed a blood transfusion, saving the little fellow's life. We agreed that Bob's children would probably remember that bit of surgery more than all the others the doctor will ever perform.

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BOOK NOTES

There is one new book that should be of special interest to those who have supposed that our churches will do well to survive, much less to grow and thrive. *I Believe In Church Growth* by Eddie Gibbs tells you how your church can grow. He not only puts his finger on the disease that plagues the church but provides the prescription as well. This study not only provides a scholarly basis for the principles of church growth but also practical suggestions. The author is persuaded that any church can grow it if is willing to make the sacrifice. 8.95 postpaid.

John R. W. Stott has his disciples who are ready to read whatever he publishes, and there is a reason in that he is always worth reading. *Between Two Worlds* deals with the art of preaching in the 20th century, a book that will appeal to all Bible students, not only to those who preach. This book calls for renewal of the church through a recovery of Biblical preaching. His call for both courage and humility in the pulpit will thrill you, whether your place is in the pulpit or the pew. 12.95 postpaid.

Westminister Press is publishing a series of Old Testament commentaries after the order of the late William Barclay's *Daily Bible Study* on the New Testament. They are the same size, format, and easy-to-read style. Five are now available: Genesis 1 and 2,

Exodus, Leviticus, and Daniel. If you have always wanted something on the OT that really puts it together, this is your answer. They are 6.50 each postpaid.

I Believe in Satan's Downfall by Michael Green will take you into the spirit world, showing you that demons are as real as angels, and that you have good reason to believe in Satan. It shows how Satan uses the occult, and once you read the book you will better understand the nature of temptation. 6.50 postpaid.

Some of us are convinced that hope must be the message for the 80's, for the church as well as the world. To this end we recommend Robert H. Mounce's *A Living Hope*, which is an exposition on Peter's letters of hope. 5.50 postpaid.

This year's and last year's volumes of this journal will be bound in a single volume entitled *Jesus Today,* which will be a 400-page book. You should place your order with us if you desire a copy. The book will be sent when it is ready, with invoice enclosed. We still have copies of the volume for 1979-80 at 8.50 postpaid. Two earlier volumes, one for 1977 and one for 1978, are 5.50 each postpaid.

If you are a new subscriber and would like to see what we have said in past years, we will send you 18 back issues, selected at random, dating back a decade or more, for only 3.00 postpaid. These are mailed only when an issue of the paper is mailed, so there might be some delay.

The response to the *The Stone-Campbell Movement: An Anecdotal History of Three Churches* by Leroy Garrett is most favorable. Many are ordering extra copies for friends or kin. Most who read it report that it is highly readable, informative, and interesting. And they are impressed with all the anecdotes. We are proving that the study of history can be fun. If you have neglected ordering your copy, we will put one in the mail to you on the same day we receive your order. 21.95 for 739 pages of reading, postpaid.

The trip to Israel, Nov. 8-18, led by David Reagan and Leroy Garrett, is still on, and there is yet time for you to become a part of it. The cost is $1690 from New York City. If ever you plan to go, this may be the time, for it may never be less expensive. Even if you have to borrow the money it would be worth it, and you might get Ouida to go on your note. David reports that his July trip was the best ever since many tourists have been scared away and they had it mostly to themselves. He says it is also safer than ever now that the PLO is not the threat to Israel it has been. Call us at 817-382-2063 if you want to go.

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